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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/714,887	11/13/2003	Jacqueline E. Heard	MBI-0058CIP	5720
47550	7590	04/13/2006	EXAMINER	
MENDEL BIOTECHNOLOGY C/O MOFO SF			KRUSE, DAVID H	
425 MARKET STREET			ART UNIT	
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94105			PAPER NUMBER	

1638

DATE MAILED: 04/13/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	Application No. 10/714,887	Applicant(s) HEARD ET AL.	
	Examiner David H. Kruse	Art Unit 1638	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

#### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 1 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

#### Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on \_\_\_\_.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL.                      2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

#### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-34 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☒ Claim(s) 1-34 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

#### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

#### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All    b) ☐ Some \*    c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

#### Attachment(s)

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)  | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)                                  | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)            |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date ____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: ____  |

**DETAILED ACTION**

***Election/Restrictions***

1. Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. § 121:

I. Claims 1-34, drawn to a recombinant polynucleotide that hybridizes to SEQ

ID NO: 11 or encodes a polypeptide comprising the AP2 domain of SEQ

ID NO: 12, a transgenic plant transformed with said polynucleotide and methods of using said polynucleotide, classified in class 800, subclass 298, for example.

II. Claims 13 and 21, drawn to a transgenic plant comprising a recombinant polynucleotide encoding a polypeptide that regulates abiotic stress

tolerance in a plant when over-expressed selected from SEQ ID NO: 2N-1, wherein N = 1-210, classified in class 800, subclass 298, for example.

Claims 13 and 21 are generic to both Groups I and II, and will be examined to the extent they read on the elected invention.

The inventions are distinct, each from the other because of the following reasons:

2. Inventions I and II are related as products which share an alleged common utility of modifying a characteristic of a transgenic plant but the common utility is not linked to a substantial structural feature. The products in this relationship are distinct if either or both of the following can be shown: (1) that the products encompass embodiments that are not required to perform the common utility or (2) that the products as claimed can be used to perform another utility. In this case, the polynucleotide of SEQ ID NO: 11 of Group I modifies drought stress in a transgenic plant, but the polynucleotide(s)

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encompassed by Group II can modify any one of a myriad of other plant characteristics in a transgenic plant and thus do not have a common utility or a common substantial structural feature.

3. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art as shown by their different classification, recognized divergent subject matter, and because the search required for one of the groups is not required for another, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

4. Applicant is advised that the reply to this requirement to be complete within one month (not less than 30 days) must include an election of the invention to be examined even though the requirement be traversed (37 CFR § 1.143).

5. Applicant is reminded that upon the cancellation of claims to a non-elected invention, the inventorship must be amended in compliance with 37 CFR § 1.48(b) if one or more of the currently named inventors is no longer an inventor of at least one claim remaining in the application. Any amendment of inventorship must be accompanied by a request under 37 CFR § 1.48(b) and by the fee required under 37 CFR § 1.17(i).

6. In addition, **Applicant is required to elect** one nucleic acid sequence and one encoded amino acid sequence (e.g. SEQ ID Nos. 1 and 2) to be examined in conjunction with the elected Group II. The Patent and Trademark Office recently published its policy for the examination of patent applications that claim large numbers of nucleotide sequences in the Official Gazette, 1192 O.G. 68 (November 19, 1996).

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Nucleotide sequences encoding different proteins are structurally distinct chemical compounds and are unrelated to one another. These sequences are thus deemed to normally constitute independent and distinct inventions within the meaning of 35 U.S.C. § 121. Absent evidence to the contrary, each such nucleotide is presumed to represent an independent and distinct invention, subject to a restriction requirement pursuant to 35 U.S.C. § 121 and 37 CFR § 1.141. In establishing the new policy, the Commissioner has partially waived the requirements of 37 CFR § 1.141 et seq. and permits a reasonable number of such nucleotide sequences to be claimed in a single application. It has been determined that normally ten sequences constitute a reasonable number for examination purposes. The Official Gazette Notice of November 19, 1996 is one that permits the examiner to waive restriction to no more than one invention. Since 1996, databases and resource allocations at the PTO have changed and the examination of 10 sequences on the merits in the instant application would present a burden on PTO resources. Additionally, it is noted that one nucleotide and one amino acid sequence is within the O.G. notice range of "up to ten" sequences. This election is not to be construed as an election of species.

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7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to David H. Kruse, Ph.D. whose telephone number is (571) 272-0799. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday to Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Anne Marie Grunberg can be reached at (571) 272-0975. The fax telephone number for this Group is (571) 273-8300.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the Group Receptionist whose telephone number is (571) 272-0547.

**DAVID H. KRUSE, PH.D.**  
**PRIMARY EXAMINER**



David H. Kruse, Ph.D.  
11 April 2006

8. Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to (571) 272-0547.

Patent applicants with problems or questions regarding electronic images that can be viewed in the Patent Application Information Retrieval system (PAIR) can now contact the USPTO's Patent Electronic Business Center (Patent EBC) for assistance. Representatives are available to answer your questions daily from 6 am to midnight (EST). The toll free number is (866) 217-9197. When calling please have your application serial or patent number, the type of document you are having an image problem with, the number of pages and the specific nature of the problem. The Patent Electronic Business Center will notify applicants of the resolution of the problem within 5-7 business days. Applicants can also check PAIR to confirm that the problem has been corrected. The USPTO's Patent Electronic Business Center is a complete service center supporting all patent business on the Internet. The USPTO's PAIR system provides Internet-based access to patent application status and history information. It also enables applicants to view the scanned images of their own application file folder(s) as well as general patent information available to the public.

For all other customer support, please call the USPTO Call Center (UCC) at 800-786-9199.